

**CHAPTER 14:
OTHER, NON-VA
VETERANS ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS**

PA DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS-

The Bureau for Veterans Affairs mission is to provide advice and assistance to Pennsylvania's 1.1 million veterans and their families; to provide quality care to aging veterans; and to create responsible citizens and develop lifelong learning in veterans' children who reside at Scotland School for Veterans' Children.

The services include:

- [The Pennsylvania State Veterans Home System](#)
- [Scotland School for VeteransøChildren](#)
- [Pennsylvania Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption](#)
- [Pennsylvania Veterans Emergency Assistance](#)
- [Pennsylvania Blind Veterans Pension](#)
- [Pennsylvania Paralyzed Veterans Pension](#)
- [Pennsylvania Educational Gratuity](#)
- [Pennsylvania Veterans Service Officer Support](#)
- [Pennsylvania VeteransøMemorial](#)
- [Pennsylvania DD214/215 Program](#)
- [Persian Gulf Conflict Veterans' Bonus Program](#)

There are also a wide range of federal and county benefits available to qualified veterans and their families. [County Veterans Directors](#) or [Service Officers](#) can be an excellent source of information and assistance when applying for these benefits.

Contact Information :

Bureau For Veterans Affairs
Bldg S-0-47, FTIG
Annville, PA 17003
Phone: 1-800-547-2838
Fax: (717) 861-8589
Email: bfoster@state.pa.us

Website: <http://www.paveterans.state.pa.us>

*Source from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/163.htm>

DELAWARE VALLEY VETERANS HOME

The Delaware Valley Veterans Home was dedicated on November 1, 2002 and is the Commonwealth's sixth and newest Veterans' home operated by the PA Department of Military & Veterans Affairs. The facility serves 171 veterans and their eligible spouses in a caring and home-like setting.

The facility includes many amenities, such as, Canteen, a large Community Room for activities, Library, Barber Shop, Beautician and Chapel. We have two fulltime Physicians on staff and a team of RN's, LPN's and CNA's on each shift providing around the clock continuity of care for each resident. It is a smoke-free environment.

Contact Information:

Delaware Valley Veterans Home
2701 Southampton Road
Philadelphia, PA 19154

Phone: (215) 965-5900

Fax: (215) 965-0377

Website: <http://www.dvvh.state.pa.us>

Above source directly from: <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/181.htm>

THE SCOTLAND SCHOOL FOR VETERANS' CHILDREN (SSVC)

Is a unique, state-funded institution offering quality residential education to the children of Commonwealth veterans. Established in 1895, the school has been administered by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs since 1996. Students in grades 3 through 12 live on its 186-acre campus, located in southern Franklin County, near Chambersburg.

SSVC Mission

Scotland School for Veterans' Children will:

- Provide opportunities for students of Pennsylvania veterans to develop lifelong learning skills
 - Challenge students to achieve full potential as responsible citizens with a respect for diversity in a growing global society
 - Offer a quality standards-based education within a safe, caring, residential community
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Core Values:

Kindness - Caring, cooperation, selflessness, and understanding the needs of others

Respect - Consideration/regard for ourselves, the rights and property of others, and the environment

Responsibility - Accountability for our own actions in creating a cooperative interdependent environment

Integrity - Honesty/firm adherence to a code of moral and ethical values

Safety - Actions and attitudes that prevent hurt, injury, or loss

Contact Information:

Scotland School For Veterans Children
3583 Scotland Road
Scotland, PA 17254
Phone: (717) 264-7187 ext 699
Fax: (717) 264-0322
Email: ra-ssvcadmissions@state.pa.us
Website: <http://www.ssvc.state.pa.us>

*Above source directly from: <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/987.htm>

VETERANS REAL ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM

Purpose: To provide real estate tax exemption for any honorably discharged veteran who is 100% disabled, a resident of the Commonwealth and has a financial need.

Veteran's eligibility criteria:

- Served in the military honorably

- Served during established war service dates as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
**The following decorations can also be used to establish wartime service: Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or Navy Expeditionary Medal.

- Must have a 100% permanent and total service-connected disability rating by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or as the result of military service the veteran is blind or paraplegic or has sustained the loss of two or more limbs
 - Blind: Visual acuity of three-sixtieths or ten two-hundredths, or less normal Vision
 - Paraplegic: The bilateral paralysis of the upper or lower extremities of the body

- Must be a resident of the Commonwealth

- Must occupy the real estate as his/her principal dwelling

- Dwelling is owned solely by the veteran or as an estate in the entirety

- Must prove financial need:
 - Veteran must prove financial need according to the criteria established by the State Veterans Commission if their annual income exceeds \$75,000.00
 - Applicants with an annual income of \$75,000.00 or less are given a rebuttal presumption to have a need for the exemption

**Upon the death of a qualified veteran, tax exemption may pass on to the unmarried surviving spouse if financial need can be shown.

Legislation:

Constitution: Article VIII, Section 2(c) (Establishes requirement to prove "Financial Need")

Statute: Chapter 89, Title 51

Chapter 89, Title 51 (Amended)

Procedures: Chapter 5, Title 43

Where to apply?

Contact the County Veterans Affairs Director in the county you reside to apply for this program.

How is financial need established?

An applicant, who earns over \$75,000.00 annually, will be considered to have a financial need for the exemption when the applicant's allowable expenses exceed the applicant's household income. The applicant's monthly household expenses will be calculated to include a cost of living allowance and dependent's allowance.

What happens after the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs certifies a "financial need" for the Disabled Veterans Tax Exemption and eligibility criteria has been verified?

The Board for the Assessment and Revision of Taxes will grant the tax exemption. Cases that have been granted tax exemption will be reviewed periodically (every 5 years) to determine continued need for exemption from certain real estate property taxes.

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/592.htm>

VETERANS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Purpose: Provides financial aid in an emergency and on a temporary basis (not to exceed three months in a 12-month period) to veterans and their beneficiaries who reside in Pennsylvania for the necessities of life (food, dairy, shelter, fuel and clothing).

Veteran's eligibility criteria:

- An honorably discharged veteran.
- Served during established war service dates as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
**The following decorations can also be used to establish wartime service: Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or Navy Expeditionary Medal
- Must be a Pennsylvania resident.
- Unexpected loss of income within 180 days of application through no fault of the individual.
- May not be on Public Assistance.
- Must have a financial need.
- Upon the recent death of a veteran, their spouse or orphaned children are eligible provided the veteran would have qualified prior to his/her death.

All applications are required to have verification that the applicant is not receiving monetary assistance payable under the Act of June 13, 1967 (PL 31, No 21) known as the Public Welfare Code. The application must bear the full name of the official performing the verification.

Legislation:

Statute: Chapter 85, Title 51

Procedures: Chapter 5, Title 43

Where to apply?

Contact the County Veterans Affairs Director in the county you reside to apply for this program.

What documentation is needed to apply?

Applicants must demonstrate they suffered a sudden and unexpected loss of income or other source of support such that they have a direct and immediate demonstrable financial need for assistance in order to provide themselves and their families with food, shelter, clothing, required medical care and other necessities of life. The loss must have occurred within 180 days of application.

The expenses reported must be in the category of food, shelter, clothing and required medical care of the applicant or living dependents. Funeral bills will no longer be accepted as a medical expense.

Any reported income or expense above the standard monthly expense must be accompanied by supporting documentation.

The following documents are mandatory:

- Veterans DD-214 or Report of Separation from active military service.
- A copy of the applicant's marriage license and veteran's death certificate for widows and widowers.
- A copy of a birth certificate of the veteran's dependent children and if applicable, a copy of court orders indicating payment of child support.
- Proof of residency by the veteran's tax record, employment record, voting registration or a copy of driver's license.
- Proof of loss of employment, if applicable, including the applicant's termination notice from employment and last pay slip.
- Proof of all other benefits such as unemployment compensation, education benefits, disability compensation/pension, social security, other pensions, union benefits, workman's compensation or insurance benefits.
- Proof of lack of other income, including employment pay & allowances, annual or sick leave, income from rental property, savings, financial assistance provided by family and friends, interest and dividends.
- Receipts indicating current monthly mortgage, rent and all utility payments claimed.

All applications are required to have verification that the applicant is not receiving monetary assistance payable under the Act of June 13, 1967 (PL 31, No 21) known as the Public Welfare Code. The application must bear the full name of the official performing the verification.

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/185.htm>

PA BLIND VETERANS PENSION

Purpose: Provides eligible blind veterans a pension of \$150.00 per month.

Veteran's eligibility criteria:

Served in the military honorably.

Resident of Pennsylvania upon entering the military.

suffered a service-related injury or incurred a disease which resulted in loss of vision:

- Visual acuity with correcting lens is 3/60 or 10/200 or equivalent, or less normal vision in the better eye or,
- Includes circumstances where the widest diameter of the visual field of the better eye has contracted to an angular distance of not greater than 20°.

Legislation:

Statute: Chapter 77, Title 51

Chapter 77, Title 51 (Increased amount of pension to \$100)

Chapter 77, Title 51 (Increased amount of pension to \$150)

Procedures: Chapter 5, Title 43

Where to apply?

Contact the County Veterans Affairs Director in the county you reside to apply for this program.

What documentation is needed to apply?

Need a copy of last military service DD214

Proof of Pennsylvania residency upon entering the military

United States Department of Veterans Affairs disability claim number

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/196.htm>

PARALYZED VETERANS PENSION

Purpose: Provides eligible paralyzed veterans a pension of \$150.00 per month.

Veteran's eligibility criteria:

Served in the military honorably.

Resident of Pennsylvania upon entering the military.

Suffered an injury or disease resulting in the loss or loss of use of two or more extremities (arms/hands or legs/feet).

Veteran must have a 100% permanent and total service-connected disability rating by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Legislation:

Statute: Chapter 77, Title 51

Chapter 77, Title 51 (Increased amount of pension to \$150)

Procedures: Chapter 5, Title 43

Where to apply?

Contact the County Veterans Affairs Director in the county you reside to apply for this program.

What documentation is needed to apply?

Need a copy of last military service DD214

Proof of Pennsylvania residency upon entering the military

United States Department of Veterans Affairs disability claim number

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/197.htm>

EDUCATIONAL GRATUITY PROGRAM

Purpose:

Educational Gratuity program provides financial assistance to children of honorably discharged veterans who have service-connected disabilities and served during a period of war or armed conflict or children of veterans who die or died in service during a period of war or armed conflict.

Veteran's eligibility criteria:

- Died in service during a period of war or armed conflict or,
- A veteran who has:
 - An honorable discharge from the U.S. military
 - Served during established war service dates as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

**The following decorations can also be used to establish wartime service: Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or Navy Expeditionary Medal

- Veteran must have a 100% permanent and total service-connected disability rating by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Child's eligibility criteria:

- Must be between the ages of 16 and 23, living within the Commonwealth five years prior to application and must attend a school within the Commonwealth.
- Applicant must have a financial need.

Payments:

Payment will not exceed \$500.00 per term or semester per qualified child to each approved educational institution upon submission by that approved educational institution of proof of matriculation of the applicant. Educational gratuity payments may not be made for longer than 4 scholastic years.

Legislation:

Statute: Chapter 87, Title 51

Procedures: Chapter 5, Title 43

Where to apply?

Contact the County Veterans Affairs Director in the county you reside to apply for this program.

What documentation is needed to apply?

- Need a copy of last military service DD214 or Military Death Certificate of the sponsoring veteran
- Copy of birth certificate of applicant
- Proof of identification (driver's license, voter registration, etc.)
- Proof of Pennsylvania residency for last five (5) years

*Above source directly from

<http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/201.htm>

PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER SUPPORT

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs works with its partners to ensure advocacy for all Pennsylvania veterans.

The Veteran Service Officer support system consists of United States Department of Veterans Affairs Accredited Representatives hosted by Veteran Service Organizations, County and State government. Most representatives are recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary for preparation, presentation and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the USDVA.

Seeking benefits from the USDVA without proper representation can be difficult to say the least. Understanding the complex rules, laws and evidence requirements can be very technical and confusing. We strongly recommend that no veteran attempt to navigate this system without proper representation and assistance of an accredited representative or organization.

Veteran Service Officers serve as the veterans' assigned representative at no cost to the veteran. They help identify what evidence is required in the claim process. They monitor the process of the claim through the adjudication process and intercede on the veterans' behalf if problems arise. They review decisions made by the USDVA to ensure veterans receive the full benefits for which entitled.

County Veteran Service Officers

All 67 counties in Pennsylvania are authorized a County Director of Veteran Affairs (CDVA) by county code. Most are accredited by the USDVA and either by the state service organization or a veteran service organization, or both. Most are active members of the Pennsylvania Association of County Directors of Veteran Affairs and many are also members of the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers. CDVA provide advocacy to veterans, service members and veteran families to assist them in any veteran program or benefit.

Chartered Veteran Service Organizations

Many Veteran Service Organizations in Pennsylvania provide Veteran Service Officer Representatives who prepare, present and prosecute claims for benefits upon behalf of veterans and family members with the USDVA. You do not normally have to be a member of the specific organization to receive service from them. To contact an Accredited Representative, go <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/846.htm> & click on the link below:

- [American Legion](#)
- [AMVETS](#)
- [Disabled American Veterans](#)
- [Military Order of the Purple Heart](#)
- [Veterans of Foreign Wars](#)
- [United Spinal Association](#)
- [Vietnam Veterans of America](#)
- [Jewish War Veterans](#)

State Service Officers

Pennsylvania operates its own Veteran Service Organization with three field offices. State Veteran Service Officers provide representation of claims submitted by CDVA service officers as well as individual veteran representation. The state service officer program works in harmony with the USDVA Regional Offices, Veteran Service Organizations and all veteran advocates assisting veterans to obtain all county, state and federal benefits. To contact one of the DMVA Field Offices, go <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/846.htm> & click on the link below:

[Philadelphia Field Office](#)

[Pittsburgh Field Office](#)

[Fort Indiantown Gap Field Office](#)

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/846.htm>

PA VETERANS MEMORIAL PA VETERANS MEMORIAL

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Hours of Operation:

Monday - Friday

8:30 AM to 2:00 PM

Address: RR#2 Box 484

Indiantown Gap Road

Annville, PA 17003

Phone: (717) 865-5254

Fax: (717) 865-5256

At its site at the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial is the first in the Commonwealth to honor veterans of all eras from the Revolutionary War forward. This Memorial stands - a central location for ceremony and contemplation, education and commemoration - in lasting tribute to those who served our state and nation in times of war and peace.

The Indiantown Gap National Cemetery opened on September 20, 1982. It is the sixth largest national cemetery with 677 acres and a projected capacity of 55,000 Gravesites.

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/340.htm>

DD 214/DD 215 PROGRAMS

Almost half of the contact we receive from veterans and others pertains to locating a DD 214. A document so important should be kept in a safe place. We highly recommend that veterans record their discharges with their County Courthouse so as to be able to obtain free certified copies for the remainder of their life and available upon their death.

The DD 214 provides the member and the service with a concise record of a period of service with the Armed Forces at the time of the member's separation, discharge or change in military status. In addition, the form is an authoritative source of information for both governmental agencies and the Armed Forces for purposes of employment, benefit and reenlistment data.

If you do not currently have a copy of your Certificate of Release or Discharge, DD Form 214, now is the time to obtain it before you need it.

PENNSYLVANIA NATIONAL GUARD

Pennsylvania Army and Air National Guard maintain a state file of service after 1985. Information from these state files varies but should include records of enlistment, discharge and other administrative actions. The veteran or next of kin of a deceased veteran can obtain copies of available information by providing a Record Request Form, mailed to:

Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs
Attention: Record Custodian (Insert Army or Air)
Bldg 0-47, FTIG
Annville, PA 17003-5002

The Pennsylvania State Archives maintains evidence of service for Pennsylvania Military units during the period 1775-1985. You can review their holdings and procedures at:

<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/Bah/DAM/milit2.htm>

MILITARY VETERANS, NEXT-OF-KIN, AND GENEALOGISTS

Military veterans and next-of-kin (Defined as surviving spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, sister or brother) can easily request copies of discharges and other Personnel records at:

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html>

Genealogists and others must submit a Standard Form 180 and special rules apply. You can read these rules at: <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/general-public.html>

If you have been discharged from the military service, with no remaining service obligation, your Personnel Files are most probably stored at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). If you require information maintained in your Personnel Files you should review this site:

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>

A DD Form 215 is used to correct errors or additions to a DD Form 214 discovered after the original had been delivered and/or distribution had been made.

A DD Form 214/215 is prepared in 8 copies and distributed as follows:

- Copy 1 ó Member
- Copy 2 ó Service Personnel File
- Copy 3 ó United States Department of Veteran Affairs
- Copy 4 ó Member (if initialed in Block 30)
- Copy 5 ó US Dept of Labor
- Copy 6 ó State Director of Veteran Affairs (if checked yes in block 20)
- Copy 7&8 ó Distributed in accordance with Military Service Dept directions

SERVICE MEDICAL RECORDS

If you are attempting to locate your Service Medical Records you should review the information at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/medical.html#medical-claims> to determine where to start your search.

If you had an overnight stay in a military treatment facility while on active duty, a clinical record of that treatment most likely exists and is available. To review the rules and procedures for requesting Clinical Records refer to: <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/public/active-duty-medicalrecords.html>

Veterans who plan to file a claim for benefits with the USDV do not need to request copies of Service Medal Records. The VA will obtain them if not already in their possession.

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA/207.htm>

PERSIAN GULF CONFLICT VETERANS' BONUS PROGRAM

Background: The Persian Gulf Conflict was fought from August 1990 until August 1991 following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. On April 24, 2006, Governor Ed Rendell signed House Bill 1820 into law as Act 29 of 2006. Approval of this program was endorsed by the State VeteransøCommission, the Pennsylvania War Veterans Council, the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations and many veteransøorganizations in the Commonwealth.

Ballot Question: On November 7, 2006, Pennsylvania voters gave overwhelming approval to a ballot question to fund this program. The bond issue will create a fund for the payment of compensation to members and former members of the Armed Forces who served in the Persian Gulf Conflict and were Pennsylvania residents at the time of such service. The \$20 million estimated amount is based on the number of Pennsylvania veterans who performed active service in the Armed Forces in the Persian Gulf Theater of Operations.

Who is Eligible: The following veterans may be eligible for benefits under this program:

- The veteran must have served on active duty in the Persian Gulf Theater of Operations during the period from August 2, 1990 to August 31, 1991 and received the Southwest Asia Service Medal.
- The veteran must have been a legal resident of Pennsylvania at the time of military service.
- The veteran must have served under honorable conditions.

Amount of Compensation: Eligible Pennsylvania veterans of the Persian Gulf Conflict will receive \$75 per month for each month (or major fraction) of active service in the Persian Gulf Conflict Theater up to a maximum of \$525. Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) will be paid on behalf of veterans who died in active service in the Persian Gulf Theater or as a result of service-connected wounds, diseases or injuries sustained during active service in the Persian Gulf Theater. In addition, \$5,000 will be paid to Persian Gulf Conflict prisoners of war.

Applications: DMVA will begin to accept applications for the Persian Gulf Conflict VeteransøBenefit Program some time in the latter part of the first quarter of 2008. The deadline for submitting applications for this benefit is August 31, 2015.

Payments: DMVA expects to make the first ðbonusö payments under this program sometime in 2008.

*Above source directly from <http://www.milvet.state.pa.us/DMVA>

COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICES

These are not VAMC but they will help many Veterans issues, including filing claims with VA

BERKS COUNTY

1243 County Road
Leesport, PA 19533

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Phone and Fax 610-378-5601 ext. 8150, fax 610-378-5627
Internet - email: jkingkinger@countyofberks.com
Web: <http://www.co.berks.pa.us>

BUCKS COUNTY

Neshaminy Manor Center
Neshaminy Complex, Building K
Doylestown, PA 18901

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm
Phone and Fax 215-345-3307, fax 215-345-3833

Bucks County Government Services Center Branch Office

7321 New Falls Rd.
Levittown, PA 19055

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm
Phone 215-949-5800

Quakertown Government Services Center

515 S. West End Blvd.
Quakertown, PA 18951

Office hours - Wednesday only 9:00 am to Noon
Internet: email: dhfrale@co.bucks.pa.us
Web: <http://www.buckscounty.org>

CHESTER COUNTY

P.O.Box 2747, 601 Westtown Rd., Suite 385
West Chester, PA 19382-4545

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Phone and fax: 610-344-6375, fax 610-344-4552
Internet: email: pandriole@chesco.org
Web: <http://dsf.chesco.org>

DELAWARE COUNTY

201 W. Front St.
Media, PA 19063

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Phone and fax: 610-891-4646, fax 610-566-3947
Internet: email: delcova@county.delaware.pa.us
Web: <http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/depts/veterans.html>

LANCASTER COUNTY

150 N. Queen St., Suite 101
Lancaster, PA 17603-3562

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm
Phone and fax: 717-299-7920, fax 717-209-3077
Internet: email: DTooth@co.lancaster.pa.us
Web: <http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us>

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

P.O.Box 311, 1430 Dekalb St.
Norristown, PA 19404-0311

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:30 am to 4:15 pm
Phone and fax: 610-278-3285, fax 610-278-5935
Internet: email: jseader@mail.montcopa.org
Web: <http://www.montgo.org/mcva>

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY

317 City Halls
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3205

Office hours - Monday - Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm
Phone and fax: 215-686-3256, fax 215-686-3267
Internet: email: joycemckewon@phila.gov
Web: none